

**Northern Virginia Regional Strategic Planning Project
Steering Committee Meeting – Draft Notes
October 27, 2004**

In Attendance:

Jane Anthony, NVTC Parent/PAIR
Jo Ellen Armstrong, Snowden at Fredericksburg
George Barker, HSANV
John Beghtol, Western State Hospital
Allen Berenson, Fairfax-Falls Church CSB
Jessica Burmester, Board Member, Fairfax-Falls Church CSB
Mary Burger, Loudoun CSB
Joan Durman, Consultant
Sally Garrett, NVMHI
Mike Gilmore, Alexandria CSB
Amanda Goza, NVMHI
Wendy Gradison, PRS

Betsy Greer, NAMI-Arlington
Anne Marie Hermann
Joe Hinshaw, NVMHI Advisory Council
Sharon Jones, Fairfax-Falls Church CSB
Leslie Katz, NVTC
Cindy Kemp, Arlington CSB
Cathy Pumphrey, Fairfax-Falls Church CSB
Lou Rosato, NVMHI
Phil Ross, NAMI-NoVA
Richard Spector, Fairfax-Falls Church CSB
Leslie Weisman, Arlington CSB
L. William Yolton, State Coalition

Jim Thur welcomed the group and introductions were made.

1. Announcements

- Jim Thur reported that he and Lynn DeLacy were interviewed by a Washington Post reporter regarding the possible shortage of psychiatric hospital beds.
- Rev. L. William Yolton asked who was coordinating the review of the human rights regulations and Jim Thur replied it is being handled within each CSB.

2. Approval of Notes from July Meeting

The notes of the July 28, 2004 meeting were approved as submitted.

3. Review of purpose, membership, structure and work plan

Jim Thur briefly reviewed the meeting agenda. Jim explained the regional process was intended to focus on how to make planful regional changes and work toward changes at the state level. Jim reviewed handouts depicting the Partnership's structure and membership. Jim asked that work group members provide input on the "Task Schedule for Achieving Key Outcomes during the 2004/2005 Planning Cycle" document.

4. Updates

- a. Recovery conference – Jim Thur commended the group who organized the Recovery conference, which was well attended and well received. Leslie Weisman reported 238 people attended the conference, with a good mix of consumers, family members and professionals. Participants were asked for feedback on what the next steps toward the Recovery model should be. Work group members and compiling that and other conference feedback. Rev. L. William Yolton commended those working on the conference, as there were difficulties at the conference location early in the morning and staff quickly worked to resolve them so they were invisible to conference participants.

- b. Mental Health and related work groups – Leslie Weisman indicated the Mental Health work group met on October 13 and discussed their mission. The group also discussed ways to treat consumers in the community rather than in hospitals and agreed to meet every other month. Leslie noted there are three active subgroups as well, Forensic, Recovery and Co-Occurring Disorders. The Forensic group is working to develop a regional inventory and develop an employment track, especially for NGRI persons. Rev. L. William Yolton asked how children and older adults fit in with the Mental Health groups and Leslie replied they are open to working with the newly formed groups and are still working out specifics. Jim Thur suggested the groups work together to schedule a joint meeting at some time in the future.
- c. Children and Youth work group – Allen Berenson reported they held their first meeting in September, where they discussed the composition of the group, to include representatives from CSBs, CSAs, private providers as well as consumers. Allen indicated more consumer involvement would be beneficial. The group formulated seven categories of concerns and will begin working on them shortly.
- d. Older Adults work group – Anne Hermann indicated a planning meeting is scheduled for November 18 and participants need to be identified. Richard Spector noted that both public and private stakeholders are needed, as well as advocates and consumers, with a mission of developing achievable goals, including transition issues.
- e. Private psychiatric hospitals update –
 - George Barker indicated it is still likely that four local psychiatric units will close, resulting in a net loss of 100 beds for the area.
 - George noted that it appears that Mount Vernon Hospital will not be moving, and has added 7 psychiatric beds but is not likely to add more.
 - The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors is working to develop the health/hospital portion of their Comprehensive Plan. George also noted the Board is reviewing HCA's zoning change request, but Loudoun's Planning Commission has advised them to deny the request. He added that HCA plans to file an appeal with Circuit Court if that happens and if that happens, the case should go to court by summer 2005. If this effort is unsuccessful, HCA will need to make decisions on the fate of both Northern Virginia Community Hospital (NVCH) and Dominion Hospital. George added that with the loss of beds in the area, NVCH has taken on a great deal of difficult public clients.
 - George noted Virginia Hospital Center held a ribbon cutting ceremony for their new facility and patients will gradually be shifted there from the existing center. He added they will reopen 20 psychiatric beds.
 - John Beghtol reported that Western State Hospital has been at a 100% utilization rate for the past four months and added that even when funds are available, private beds are not available for purchase. John reviewed admissions data for Western State.
 - Sharon Jones added that the DAD private bed purchase numbers are above normal as well.
 - Jim Thur indicated the DMHMRSAS Commissioner is very aware of the problem. He also asked if it was a matter of higher volume or a higher length of stay. Sharon Jones responded that it is higher volume, as lengths of stay are shorter than ever. She added that voluntary admissions are being scrutinized more closely. Lou Rosato indicated new jail diversion

programs have been set up, which will also contribute to the problem. Sharon added that homelessness is also increasing.

- Rev. L. William Yolton noted that NVMHCA has been discussing the issue of unnecessary hospitalization.
- John Beghtol noted that reinvestment has worked, as Western has been able to close a long term unit and transfer funds to the community, but it has caused a new dilemma.
- Jim Thur added that the lack of increases for expenses/inflation has aggravated the problems further.

f. Deaf services – Jim Thur reported that a new Deaf services work group has been added to the Partnership. He indicated the Fairfax-Falls Church CSB has a new state-funded deaf services position, filled by Dr. Natalie Rinker, who will also head up the work group. He noted that group's recommendations will be incorporated into the Partnership's work.

5. State-level priorities

Jim Thur noted the State Special Populations Work Group Recommendations, which were handed out at the meeting. The Commissioner has asked that this list of recommendations be prioritized for inclusion in the Department's Strategic Plan. Jim asked group members to complete and return the survey on Regional Recommendations for State-Level Action, which was handed out at the meeting.

6. Governor's Conference

Jim Thur indicated the Governor's Conference on Self-Determination, Empowerment and Recovery will be held December 9 and 10 in Richmond. Jane Anthony reviewed the agenda for the conference. Several of the workshops will be led by representatives from Northern Virginia. Jim indicated the Partnership will be able to provide assistance to some consumers and group members who do not have sponsoring agencies who can pay for their attendance at the conference. The names of interested persons should be forward to Lara Larson at the Fairfax-Falls Church CSB.

Sally Garrett and Amanda Goza indicated they are working to finalize their presentation for the conference, which will be focused on partnerships and coordination. Amanda briefly reviewed the levels of treatment which were developed in late 2003 and used in surveying the local psychiatric hospitals.

7. Other Business

Sharon Jones noted the Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for December 3. Invitations should be forthcoming.

Next Meeting:

The next Steering Committee meeting was scheduled for January 26 at the Government Center in Conference Rooms 9/10.

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